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Missouri's Unemployment Rate Falls Again in October

Missouri's unemployment rate continued to fall in October, dropping two-tenths of a point to 5.2 percent according to the Missouri Department of Economic Development. The seasonally adjusted rate has been edging down since it peaked in June at 5.7 percent. Over the past year, the number of people who are unemployed has decreased by 7,200 to 156,800, while the rate has fallen by three-tenths of a point.

The state's not-seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate also fell in October, decreasing by four-tenths of a point to 4.9 percent from 5.3 percent in September. This rate is one-tenth of a point lower than it was one year ago.

"Once again the unemployment rate continues to be an encouraging economic indicator for our state," said DED Director Joseph L. Driskill. "We are pleased that the percentage of those unemployed in Missouri continues to be well below the rest of the nation; on a seasonally adjusted basis we are eight-tenths below the national average and our unadjusted rate is seven-tenths below. Certainly we are hopeful that our unemployment rate, though better than 26 other states, will continue its decline as Missouri's strong business climate encourages further growth of businesses and jobs."

Missouri's unemployment rate remains well below the nation's level. The U.S. seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell one-tenth of a percentage point to 6.0 percent in October. Total employment edged up by 441,000 across the nation in October.

Payroll employment in Missouri was little changed in October. At 2,659,300 jobs, the seasonally adjusted figure was 3,300 jobs lower than in September. The decrease came from two industry super sectors: manufacturing and leisure and hospitality. Factory employment was down by 3,200, after slowly edging up during much of this year. Leisure and hospitality employment was down by 7,300 jobs. These decreases were partly offset by gains in most other industry groups including construction (1,000 jobs); trade, transportation and utilities (1,700), other services (1,100); and government (2,300).

Seasonal adjustment may have played a role in the month's developments. Leisure and hospitality employment is seasonal, tending to decrease slowly after the summer, with decreases accelerating in late fall and winter. Cool, wet weather in early October and a relatively late reference week could have caused employment to dip earlier this year than in some years. In the case of manufacturing, employment didn't see the seasonal improvement that was expected in October. Not-seasonally-adjusted data show a smaller decrease: 1,000 jobs spread primarily through the durable goods industries. The largest reported decreases were 300 jobs in electronic manufacturing and motor vehicle manufacturing. The largest increase was 400 jobs in food manufacturing.

Over the past year, employment has decreased by 26,700 jobs (not seasonally adjusted). Government employment was down by 5,900. In the private sector, trade, transportation and utilities industries experienced an aggregate decrease of 11,400 jobs. The largest drops were in retail trade (-9,100) and air transportation (-5,500). Wholesaling of nondurable goods continued to be a plus, adding 3,000 jobs over the year. The professional and business services group lost 6,100 jobs on balance since October 2002. Employment services (including temporary help) and administrative and support services accounted for most of the decrease. Some industries in this group have added jobs over the past year, notably management of companies has added 2,700 jobs and accounting services has added 1,300 jobs.

There continue to be some sources of strength in the state's labor markets. Construction employment has gained 5,600 jobs over the past year. Health care and social assistance have added 4,500 jobs.

MISSOURI UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
FOR METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS (MSAs), LABOR MARKET AREAS (LMAs), AND COUNTIES
CURRENT MONTH (OCTOBER 2003), PREVIOUS TWO MONTHS (AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2003), AND YEAR AGO (OCTOBER 2002)

| | OCT 2003 | SEP 2003 | AUG 2003 | OCT 2002 | | OCT 2003 | SEP 2003 | AUG 2003 | OCT 2002 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| U.S. (not seasonally adjusted) | 5.6 | 5.8 | 6.0 | 5.3 | Atchison | 2.3 | 2.8 | 3.8 | 2.3 |
| MISSOURI | 4.9 | 5.3 | 5.8 | 5.0 | Audrain | 4.8 | 5.6 | 6.2 | 4.2 |
| ST. LOUIS MSA | 5.3 | 5.8 | 6.2 | 5.3 | Barton | 3.8 | 4.1 | 4.9 | 3.6 |
| Franklin | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.9 | 5.0 | Bates | 6.4 | 7.0 | 8.1 | 6.6 |
| Jefferson | 4.5 | 5.0 | 5.4 | 4.9 | Benton | 5.9 | 6.4 | 7.3 | 6.5 |
| Lincoln | 4.6 | 5.0 | 5.5 | 4.9 | Caldwell | 6.5 | 6.9 | 9.1 | 6.8 |
| St. Charles | 3.5 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 3.6 | Carroll | 4.0 | 4.3 | 5.2 | 4.8 |
| St. Louis County | 4.5 | 5.0 | 5.2 | 4.6 | Cedar | 6.4 | 6.3 | 7.7 | 5.4 |
| Warren | 5.2 | 5.5 | 5.9 | 4.8 | Chariton | 5.9 | 6.7 | 6.6 | 8.1 |
| St. Louis City | 9.4 | 10.4 | 11.1 | 9.3 | Clark | 6.6 | 6.5 | 7.9 | 5.8 |
| KANSAS CITY MSA | 5.5 | 5.6 | 5.9 | 5.9 | Cooper | 2.9 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 3.5 |
| Cass | 4.6 | 4.9 | 5.5 | 4.3 | Crawford | 5.9 | 6.3 | 6.8 | 6.0 |
| Clay | 4.1 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 4.3 | Dade | 4.3 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 4.3 |
| Clinton | 4.6 | 4.8 | 6.1 | 5.0 | Dallas | 5.2 | 5.5 | 6.7 | 5.5 |
| Jackson | 6.3 | 6.8 | 7.3 | 6.8 | Daviess | 5.6 | 5.6 | 6.7 | 5.4 |
| Lafayette | 4.4 | 4.9 | 6.3 | 4.7 | DeKalb | 4.5 | 4.7 | 6.4 | 4.1 |
| Platte | 3.9 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.3 | Dent | 5.4 | 6.0 | 6.8 | 6.0 |
| Ray | 5.5 | 5.9 | 6.9 | 4.5 | Douglas | 7.6 | 9.8 | 8.8 | 10.3 |
| SPRINGFIELD MSA | 3.5 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 4.1 | Dunklin | 7.1 | 7.5 | 8.9 | 6.7 |
| Christian | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4.9 | Gasconade | 6.2 | 5.6 | 7.0 | 4.3 |
| Greene | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.9 | Gentry | 2.9 | 3.2 | 4.3 | 3.1 |
| Webster | 3.2 | 3.5 | 4.2 | 5.1 | Grundy | 5.3 | 5.7 | 6.4 | 4.1 |
| JOPLIN MSA | 4.5 | 4.9 | 5.7 | 5.2 | Harrison | 3.5 | 3.8 | 4.2 | 4.0 |
| Jasper | 4.4 | 4.7 | 5.1 | 4.8 | Henry | 6.8 | 7.1 | 8.3 | 5.2 |
| Newton | 4.7 | 5.2 | 6.9 | 6.0 | Hickory | 9.2 | 9.2 | 10.3 | 6.3 |
| COLUMBIA MSA | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.4 | 2.1 | Holt | 3.4 | 4.0 | 4.9 | 3.5 |
| Boone | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.4 | 2.1 | Howard | 3.6 | 3.5 | 4.7 | 4.0 |
| ST. JOSEPH MSA | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.7 | 5.5 | Iron | 6.8 | 7.5 | 8.3 | 10.4 |
| Andrew | 4.7 | 4.8 | 5.3 | 4.5 | Johnson | 3.4 | 3.7 | 4.4 | 3.5 |
| Buchanan | 5.2 | 5.4 | 5.8 | 5.7 | Knox | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.1 |
| ADAIR-SCHUYLER LMA | 3.6 | 4.1 | 5.3 | 2.3 | Laclede | 7.2 | 8.1 | 9.7 | 5.2 |
| Adair | 3.4 | 3.9 | 5.0 | 2.1 | Lewis | 3.5 | 3.8 | 4.6 | 3.1 |
| Schuyler | 4.8 | 5.4 | 7.4 | 3.2 | Linn | 10.4 | 11.2 | 12.0 | 12.1 |
| BUTLER-CARTER-RIPLEY LMA | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.8 | 5.1 | Livingston | 3.9 | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.0 |
| Butler | 4.5 | 4.7 | 5.4 | 4.8 | McDonald | 5.1 | 5.3 | 6.7 | 5.9 |
| Carter | 5.0 | 5.2 | 5.0 | 4.6 | Macon | 4.6 | 5.2 | 5.4 | 4.9 |
| Ripley | 6.6 | 7.1 | 7.5 | 6.6 | Madison | 5.8 | 6.6 | 7.5 | 7.3 |
| CAMDEN-MILLER LMA | 4.5 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 5.1 | Mercer | 4.2 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.2 |
| Camden | 4.4 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.1 | Monroe | 6.0 | 6.5 | 7.6 | 5.9 |
| Miller | 4.6 | 4.3 | 5.0 | 5.0 | Montgomery | 5.8 | 6.0 | 6.8 | 4.9 |
| CAPE GIRARDEAU-SCOTT-NEW MADRID LMA | 4.8 | 5.2 | 5.9 | 5.0 | Morgan | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.4 | 6.1 |
| Bollinger | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.5 | 4.7 | Nodaway | 1.3 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 1.5 |
| Cape Girardeau | 3.4 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 3.5 | Ozark | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 5.4 |
| Mississippi | 6.9 | 7.5 | 9.1 | 7.9 | Pemiscot | 8.9 | 9.9 | 11.2 | 9.5 |
| New Madrid | 8.2 | 9.4 | 10.9 | 9.8 | Perry | 2.7 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 |
| Scott | 5.4 | 5.6 | 6.6 | 5.2 | Pettis | 4.8 | 5.2 | 6.7 | 5.2 |
| COLE-CALLAWAY-MONITEAU LMA | 2.7 | 3.1 | 3.8 | 3.0 | Pike | 4.2 | 4.4 | 5.1 | 4.7 |
| Callaway | 3.1 | 3.6 | 4.1 | 3.1 | Polk | 3.7 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.0 |
| Cole | 2.4 | 2.8 | 3.5 | 2.6 | Pulaski | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 4.2 |
| Moniteau | 2.4 | 2.4 | 3.3 | 3.8 | Putnam | 5.2 | 6.1 | 6.8 | 3.7 |
| Osage | 3.8 | 3.8 | 5.0 | 3.8 | Randolph | 4.0 | 4.6 | 6.2 | 4.2 |
| HOWELL -OREGON -SHANNON LMA | 5.7 | 5.3 | 5.9 | 4.8 | Reynolds | 8.2 | 8.3 | 10.2 | 7.3 |
| Howell | 5.9 | 5.7 | 6.4 | 4.6 | St. Clair | 5.8 | 6.8 | 8.1 | 5.3 |
| Oregon | 3.9 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 3.9 | Ste. Genevieve | 4.2 | 4.9 | 5.5 | 4.7 |
| Shannon | 6.8 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 6.5 | Saline | 4.3 | 5.0 | 6.1 | 4.9 |
| LAWRENCE-BARRY LMA | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 4.3 | Scotland | 2.3 | 2.8 | 4.1 | 3.3 |
| Barry | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.8 | 4.4 | Shelby | 4.5 | 5.7 | 4.6 | 4.1 |
| Lawrence | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 4.2 | Stoddard | 5.0 | 5.4 | 6.7 | 5.4 |
| MARION-RALLS LMA | 4.6 | 5.0 | 5.7 | 4.6 | Stone | 5.8 | 5.9 | 6.3 | 5.4 |
| Marion | 4.5 | 5.1 | 5.8 | 4.6 | Sullivan | 6.3 | 7.0 | 8.4 | 3.3 |
| Ralls | 4.8 | 4.8 | 5.5 | 4.7 | Taney | 3.3 | 3.5 | 4.1 | 3.4 |
| PHELPS-MARIES LMA | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.6 | 3.1 | Texas | 7.3 | 7.7 | 8.6 | 6.2 |
| Maries | 3.2 | 3.6 | 4.4 | 3.2 | Vernon | 4.4 | 4.5 | 5.7 | 4.7 |
| Phelps | 2.7 | 2.8 | 3.4 | 3.1 | Wayne | 9.6 | 9.3 | 10.1 | 9.6 |
| ST. FRANCOIS-WASHINGTON LMA | 6.6 | 7.5 | 7.9 | 7.6 | Worth | 3.8 | 3.1 | 3.7 | 4.3 |
| St. Francois | 6.2 | 7.3 | 7.6 | 7.2 | Wright | 6.8 | 7.1 | 8.0 | 7.0 |
| Washington | 7.4 | 8.0 | 8.7 | 8.5 | | | | | |

NOTE: DATA FOR COUNTIES WITHIN MSAs/LMAs ARE DISAGGREGATED FROM MSA/LMA TOTALS.

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